

History of William McDonald

William McDonald son of James and Sarah Ferfuson McDonald was born at Crawford Burns County Down Ireland, Nov. 16, 1834. He was the fifth in line of ten children, he together with the family emigrated from Ireland to America in 1844. They landed at New Orleans and were five weeks going from there to Nauvoo on a little vessel called the "Maid of Iowa". Which belonged to Joseph Smith on arriving at Nauvoo the family moved into a log house which had neither a door nor window. They fixed it up the best they could and lived there for two years. Those who were old enough working in the meantime at anything they could get to do. During the stay at this place the entire family had that dreadful disease known as Ague, for nine months.

After lining for two years at Nauvoo the people in that part became so hostile toward the Mormons and made it so uncomfortable for them that they were forced to move. He and family on leaving there moved to a place called Bone Crate, about thirty miles west from Nauvoo on the Des Moines River. Here they lived for three years, and William with the other members of the family who were large enough worked for the purpose of obtaining money and an outfit with which to come to Utah. They secured during this time three yoke of cows and oxen, two wagons and some other personal property, and in the spring of '49 began their journey across the plains with the above outfit.

He spent the winter of '49 at a place called Kanesville near Council Bluffs, and in the spring of '50 moved on for Utah. On reaching the Platt river a number of their company had died and many more were sick with cholera. His father dug a grave and buried a man at the first crossing to the Platte river, the man had died of cholera, his father died of that disease the same night at the crossing the second time of the Platte river, and was buried there in a hole covered over with earth, without a coffin or any ceremony, his mother left alone with her little family had to go bravely on leaving her companion's body there. They arrived at Salt Lake in September 1850 and remained there about six weeks. There was better feed for cattle at what is called Lehi and owing to that the family went there and on arriving were persuaded to build which they did, a log house at the little place now called Alpine, and lived there during the winter of '50 and in the spring of '51 moved on to what is now called the city of Springville.

Here they built a cedar home which is still inhabited and put under cultivation twenty acres of land, they raised on this about three hundred bushels of wheat the first year. The second year about two hundred and then the alkali arose so near the surface that the land would not produce a crop. They farmed a little after this on what is called Union Field Bench.

This brings us up to 1854, and while the path of William and family had not been strewn with flowers as has already been seen, yet it seems there must be troubles now with the Indians who were at that time roaming in wild bands throughout the country.

To give the reader a idea the following incident will illustrate.:

An Indian by the name of Squash kidnapped a child from a family by the name of Lemon at or near Springville, and took it into the mountains. The child cried considerable and thereby annoyed Squash where upon he placed his feet upon it and pulled it limb from limb.

So far we have dealt with his history as a member of the family. He is now nineteen years old and has assumed the responsibilities of life at this period he began Service in the Walker (Indians War) and served three years under the Command of John D. Lee, his service being in the main as a guard and in moving in families who resided outside the fort.

In 1853 he started for California and went as far as Iron County, here he became acquainted with Sariah Shirts and in that year they were united in Marriage in the old endowment house. He remained at Iron County for two years and during this time raised a crop of wheat which he tried to sell desiring to go back to Springville, it couldn't be sold at any price and he left it there to go back to Springville. This wheat became very valuable in 1856, owing to the fact that the grasshoppers ate all the wheat raised that year so he went back and got it.

In 1855 he built a house at Springville and they lived here for five years and until 1859 at which time he came to this valley, built another house, and later that year moved his family to Wasatch County.

They lived in the fort at Heber during the first winter after their arrival and in the year '61 the fort was broken up and he built a house and moved on to the land, a farm he now occupies, two miles north of Heber on the Park City road.

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In 1866 the Indians began to make trouble and he and family returned to the fort at Heber. During that year he was appointed to the officer of the first Batallion cavalry and was an active member or officer for several years and until the close of the Black Hawk war being an officer and Soldier.

He joined the church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in Ireland about 1841 and was always an ardent worker, being Pres. and other duties a full tithing payer. In 1857 an army of one thousand men were mustered of which he was one, for the purpose of protecting themselves against the army of the U.S. Army which was invading the territory without explanation.

In preparing for this it was necessary that he have two horses, one to pack, the other to ride and their being no rope or other material here that he could use for that purpose he cut the bush of cows tails off. The hair obtained there was made into ropes and used for packing purposes, so that it may be seen that he has been a soldier, officer and outside of that his life in this valley up to this time has been and is now upon the farm.

Truly it can be said that his wives by their marriage joined him heart and hand and step by step they have fought lifes battle by his side. When the great giver of all life and death shall call William and his wives to the home beyond the veil, when their voices can no longer be heard in the affairs of life then the reader of these few pages may know it is well that they once did live.